

## St. Peter and the Bearing of Our Cross

After Christ's death in Jerusalem, Peter preached the Lord Jesus, traveling widely proclaiming the way of Jesus everywhere he went. He had been in Rome when persecution against Christians (who refused to worship the emperor) became increasingly frequent and violent. Warned that his life was in grave danger, he decided to flee the city following the Appian Way to safer ground. He got as far as the ground where a little church stands today.

In Latin, the church is called "Chiesa del Domine Quo Vadis." In English, it literally means "The Church of 'Lord, Where are You Going?'" According to the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, as Peter fled the city, it was here that he encountered the risen Christ. Peter saw Jesus walking in the opposite direction going back toward the city of Rome. Peter – astonished – asked Jesus, "Lord, where are you going?" ("*Quo Vadis Domine*"). Jesus responded, "I am going back to Rome to be crucified again."

In this encounter St Peter was reminded that following Jesus was not just a philosophical endeavor or just a nice way to live, he believed that the divine life of Christ actually lived within him and within all believers. And that life required him returning to Rome to suffer with the faithful Christians who were taking up their Cross to remain faithful to the Lord. He had a cross to bear, and he bore it for his Lord and Saviour. Like St. Peter we are called to bear our particular cross no matter what it might be, and follow the Lord where He is going.

*"Let us Attend! "*



*"Take up your cross and follow me..."*

A PARISH BULLETIN OF  
ALL SAINTS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Olyphant, Pennsylvania

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15 September 2024

**Sunday After the Elevation of the Cross**

**Bulletin, Sunday, 15 September 2024**

**12th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone**

**3. Afterfeast of the Elevation of the Cross. Sunday after**

**Elevation.** Greatmartyr Niketas (Nikita) the Goth (ca. 372).

Uncovering of the Relics of St. Acacius, Bishop of Melitene

(3rd c.). Martyrs Theodotus, Asclepiodotus, and Maximus, of

Adrianopolis (305–311). Martyr Porphyrius the Actor (361).

Uncovering of the Relics of the Holy Protomartyr and

Archdeacon Stephen (415). St. Philotheus the Presbyter, in Asia

Minor (10th c.). Ven. Joseph, Abbot, of Alaverdsk in Georgia

(570). St. Joseph the New of Partos, Metropolitan of Timisoara

(1656).

**Epistles:** Galatians 2:16–20 (Sunday After Elevation); 1  
Corinthians 15:1–11 (Sunday)

**Gospel:** Mark 8:34–9:1 (Sunday After Elevation); Matthew  
19:16–26 (Sunday)

*Our souls and minds are strengthened and fortified by the regular  
reading of the Holy Scriptures. Daily readings can be found on the  
parish's wall calendar, or online by visiting the OCA's daily reading  
page <https://www.oca.org/readings>.*

**Schedule**

– **Wednesday, 18 September 2024: 9AM. Akathist to the  
Precious Cross.**

– **Saturday, 21 September 2024. 5:00–5:45PM. Fr. Paul  
available for Confession ; 6PM Great Vespers.**

– **Sunday 15 September 2024, 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost.**

**9:30AM Divine Liturgy, Followed by Agape Coffee  
Hour Fellowship.**

**Announcements**

~ A warm welcome to all our visitors. Please join us downstairs  
for Agape Coffee Hour Fellowship.

~ The parish's prayerful thanks to the Estate of Anne and Vera  
Paulishak for their generous donation to All Saints. Memory  
Eternal.

~ This Sunday and next Sunday we will continue to receive  
donations for St. Theodosius Cathedral to help in restoring their  
cathedral after their devastating fire. Please be generous.

~ Your continued prayers for all those who are local nursing  
facilities, including Buddy and Milly Kuzmiak who reside at  
Midvalley Nursing; Mary Brzuchalski who is in Carbondale  
Nursing and Rehabilitation, and William Semon who is in Elan  
Skilled Nursing in Scranton. Please out of your kindness give a  
call or make a visit.

~ Our parish will be holding an ethnic food sale on Friday, 23  
October 2024 from 11–4. More information will be  
forthcoming in the local paper. Please teel your family and  
friends.

THURSDAY

Leavetaking of the Nativity  
of the Mother of God  
Fast-free

SEPTEMBER 12

2 Corinthians 7:1-10  
John 11:47-54

*Be angry, and do not sin* (Ps. 4:4). Such anger is a useful medicine for the soul at times of temptation.

*Evagrius the Solitary* †

**HIEROMARTYR AUTONOMOS, BISHOP IN ITALY.** During the persecution of Diocletian in Italy in 298, Bishop Autonomos fled to Bithynia. He used the house of the Christian Cornelius as a church. He taught, converted, and baptized many. He built a church there dedicated to Archangel Michael and ordained Cornelius a deacon and later a priest. Leaving Cornelius in charge of the Christians, Autonomos went to Lycaonia and Isauria to preach the faith of Christ. When he returned, he began to preach in a village near Soreoi called Limnae. His newly-converted Christians smashed the idols and destroyed a temple. Seeking revenge, the pagans surrounded the church of Archangel Michael and killed Autonomos at the altar. His body was buried there by a pious deaconess named Maria. Many years later, the church was demolished. Not realizing that the saint's relics were beneath the church, the church was rebuilt in a different spot by the sea. The saint's grave was cloaked in anonymity for sixty more years. Around the year 490, a soldier was out hunting and shot a rabbit at the spot of the saint's unmarked grave. In a vision, the saint ordered him to build a church where he had shot the rabbit. The relic of St. Autonomos was found incorrupt, and the church was built and dedicated to him.



**COMMEMORATIONS:** Coronatos, Bishop of Iconium; Autonomos, bishop in Italy; Julian of Galatia, and 40 martyrs; Andronicus of Atroa; Macedonius in Phrygia, and with him Tatian and Theodulus; Daniel of Thasos; Martyr Okeanos; Sacerdos, Bishop of Lyons in Gaul; Dositheus of Tbilisi, Georgia; Bassian of Totemsk; Theodore of Alexandria; Alexis of Elnat and Zharki, fool-for-Christ; Athanasius, disciple of Sergius of Radonezh, and his disciple Athanasius; Kournoutas of Cyprus; Ailbhe (Elvis) of Emly; Translation of the relics of St. Symeon of Verkhoturys.

FRIDAY

Forefeast of the Elevation  
of the Holy Cross  
Abstain from meat and  
dairy products, and fish.

SEPTEMBER 13

Hebrews 3:1-4  
Matthew 16:13-19

Our hymns declare the strength and majesty of God. They express gratitude for His benefits and His deeds. Our psalms convey this gratitude also... Our psalms properly belong to the domain of ethics, teaching us what is to be done and avoided... These spiritual songs help us express our meaning more plainly... It is more with the mind than with the voice that we sing, offer psalms and praise God.

*St. Jerome of Stridon*

**MARTYR THEODOTUS OF ALEXANDRIA.** Theodotus lived piously among depraved people in Alexandria. His faith illumined the unbelievers' souls. Heathens seized Theodotus, beat him, and placed a crown of thorns on his head. Then they led him bound through the city and reviled him. They tore out his hair and spat in his eyes. Others wagged their heads, reminiscent of the Passion of Christ. Finally, they cast him bound into the sea. However, he was invisibly held up and floated across the water to the shore. He was seized again and tortured, but St. Theodotus never stopped glorifying the name of Jesus Christ. At last, he was beheaded.



**COMMEMORATIONS:** Cornelius the Centurion; Seleucus of Galatia; Straton of Nicomedia; Cronides, Leontius, and Serapion of Alexandria; Theodotus of Alexandria; Hierotheos of Kalamata; Ketevan, Queen of Kakheti, Georgia; Elias, Zoticus, Lucian, Valerian, Macrobius, and Gordian at Tomis in Moesia; Peter of Atroa; John of Prislop (Romania); Meletios Pegas, Patriarch of Alexandria; Litorius of Tours; Cornelius of Padan-Olonets with Dionysius and Misael; Maurilius, Bishop of Angers; New Martyrs of Jasenovac (Serbia); Commemoration of the founding of the Church of the Resurrection (the Holy Sepulcher) at Jerusalem.

SATURDAY

SEPTEMBER 14

Elevation of the Holy Cross  
Abstain from meat and  
dairy products, and fish.

1 Corinthians 1:18-24  
John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30

The sign of the cross protects us and protects us from any enemy force. When we properly put on the sign of the cross, then the Angel of Christ guards and protects us. The devil runs away from the sign of the cross, and the Angel approaches us at the sign of the cross.

*St. Seraphim of Sarov*

**VENERABLE MARY OF TARSUS.** Two elders once traveled to Tarsus and stopped at a small inn. There they found three young men and with them a harlot. One of the elders sat and began to read aloud the Gospel. When the harlot saw the elder begin to read, she sat near him to listen, but he drove her away, saying, "Wretched woman, you seem very indecent. Are you not ashamed to come and sit near us?" She answered, "I beg you, father, do not look down on me or drive me away. I know I am full of every kind of sin, but the Lord and Savior of us all, Christ our God, did not reject the harlot who came to Him." The elder said, "Yes, but the harlot did not remain a harlot." She replied, "I place my hope in the Son of the living God, that from this day onwards I won't keep on with this sinful way of life either."



**COMMEMORATIONS:** Exaltation of the Honorable and Life-Creating Cross; Placilla the Empress, wife of Theodosius the Great; Child-martyr Valerian; Martyr Theokles; Maria of Tarsus; Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage; Makarios of Thessalonica; Papas of Lycaonia; Cormac, Bishop of Cashel in Ireland; Holy Fathers of the Sixth Ecumenical Council; Repose of St. John Chrysostom; Uncovering of the relics of Sts. Alexandra, Martha, and Helen of Diveyevo; *Lesna* Icon of the Mother of God; Wonderworking Icon of St. Vlasios in Trikala, Corinth.

SUNDAY

SEPTEMBER 15

Sunday after the Holy Cross  
Fast-free

Galatians 2:16-20  
Mark 8:34-9:1

It (the Cross) manifests a great mystery: that both things in heaven, and things under the earth, and all the furthest bounds of the things that are, are ruled and sustained by Him Who gave an example of this unspeakable and mighty power in the figure of the Cross.

*St. Gregory of Nyssa*

**NEW HIEROMARTYR NIKETAS AT SERRES.** Niketas was from Lazica in Pontus, and his parents were secret Christians. He became a monk on Mount Athos at the Skete of Saint Anna and later was ordained to the priesthood at St. Panteleimon Monastery on Athos. However, Niketas desired martyrdom. He left the monastery and went to Serres in Drama. First, he confessed his sins at the Metochion of Panagia Iliokallis and received Holy Communion. Then he went to a mosque and found a teacher of sacred writing together with his students. One of the students was lame in both feet. Niketas told this student that his feet would be healed if he believed in Jesus Christ. The student told his teacher, and Niketas was arrested and imprisoned, where he was severely tortured. As Pascha dawned in 1808, orders were given to hang Niketas. Nearby was the Church of the Archangel Michael, and a deacon saw the entire area in a divine light. After three days, the Christians were permitted to take down the body of St. Niketas, and he was entombed in the Church of St. Nicholas in Serres.



**COMMEMORATIONS:** Niketas the Goth; Martyr Maximus; Bessarion I and Bessarion II of Larissa; Symeon of Thessalonica; Gerasimos of Sourvia; Philotheus of Asia Minor; Joseph of Alaverdi; Porphyrios the Mime; Joseph the New; 2 maidens slain by the sword; John of Crete; Nicetas, disciple of St. Sergius of Radonezh; Niketas of Serres; Ignatius of Aleksievo-Akatov; Dimitry of Melitopol; Mirin of Paisley; Philotheos the presbyter, of Asia Minor; Uncovering of the relics of the Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen.

will our soul grow and live if it does not feed on Christ the living and immortal. These are not words about life in general as lived by nature, nor about the stunted life that pagans live, but about that special, divine and eternal life that is full, full of joy. Only Christ gives this life, and it comes only to those who feed on Christ. Each man is made to grow by the food he eats. These words are not about bodily food, for bodily food does not nourish the soul of a man but only his body. People are differentiated by their bodily growth and life, but this difference is totally unimportant. However, the difference of spiritual growth and life among men is vast: the growth of the soul in some men hardly raises them from the earth, while in others it lifts them to heaven. The difference between Herod and John the Baptist is no less than the difference between a king and an angel. As the former drags his body and soul around the earth, and wickedly defends his earthly throne, so the latter stands in his body on a rock in the wilderness, and in his soul is lifted up to heaven among the angels.

Oh, my brethren, let us lift up our souls to heaven, where Christ the Lord sits on the throne of eternal glory, and nourish our souls and hearts with Him, the pure and almighty life. Only thus shall we be made worthy to become co-inheritors with Him of the Kingdom of heaven.

O Jesus our Lord, our true God, our sweet nourishment and loving Nourisher, tear us not away from Thy divine breasts, for we are weak and helpless. Nourish us with Thyself, O our merciful Nourisher. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

## SEPTEMBER 13th

### 1. The Consecration of the Church of the Resurrection of Christ.

When the holy Empress Helena found the Lord's Cross in Jerusalem, she stayed longer in the city and built churches in Gethsemane, in Bethlehem, on the Mount of Olives and in other places that commemorated the life and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. On Golgotha, where she found the Precious Cross, she began to build an enormous church, under whose roof would be the places both where the Lord was crucified and where He was buried, the holy Empress wanting to bring under one roof the places of His suffering and His glory. But Helena went to the Lord before this magnificent church was completed. It was finished in the same year in which Constantine completed thirty years on the throne, and so the consecration of the church and the Emperor's Jubilee were fixed for the same day, September 13th, 335. At that time, a local Council of bishops was meeting in Tyre. These bishops, with many others, made their way to Jerusalem, to the solemn consecration of the Church of the Resurrection of the Lord. It was then instituted that this day, as a day of victory and triumph for the Church of Christ, should be celebrated every year.

### 2. The Hieromartyr Cornelius the Centurion.

A Roman and an officer in Palestinian Caesarea, he was baptised by the Apostle Peter after a heavenly vision (Acts 10:1), and was the first pagan to enter the Church of God. Until then, some thought that the Church of Christ was only for the Jews and for those who received Jewish circumcision. Being baptised, Cornelius left everything and followed the Apostle Peter. The Apostle later made him bishop and sent him to the pagan town of Skepseis, where holy Cornelius suffered much humiliation and pain for the sake of Christ. But, by the power of God, he destroyed the temple of Apollo and baptised the prince of that town, Dimitrios, and two hundred and seventy seven pagans. Forewarned by God of the day of his death, he gathered all the Christians together, gave them counsel, prayed to God and peacefully went to his Lord full of

years. In time, his grave was forgotten and neglected, but the saint appeared to Silvanus, the Bishop of Troas, and showed him the whereabouts of his grave, commanding him to build a church there. The bishop did so, with the help of a wealthy citizen, Eugenius. Many miracles have been performed over his relics.

### 3. The Holy Martyrs Macrobius and Gordian.

From Pamphlagonis, they were at first imperial cup-bearers, but, when they revealed that they were Christians, the Emperor exiled them to Sceta, where they were cast into the flames in a place called New Danube, in the year 320.

### 4. The Holy Martyr Ketevana, Queen of Georgia.

She suffered as a Christian under Shah Abbas I, in 1624. By order of the Shah, a white-hot helmet was placed on her head. Her son Taymuraz, King of Georgia, laid her relics under the throne in the church at Alaverdsk in Georgia.

### 5. Our Holy Father Hierotheos.

Born in the Peloponnese in the village of Kalamata, he lived in asceticism in the monastery of Iviron on the Holy Mountain. He was distinguished by great secular learning and by strict monastic asceticism, and was at pains to fulfil the rule of St Arsenius: 'It is enough for a monk to sleep one hour out of the twenty-four.' He entered into rest in 1745 on the island of Varos, and his relics have wonderworking power. Of these relics, his head is preserved in the monastery of Iviron. On touching his holy relics in Constantinople, a blind woman received her sight.

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#### FOR CONSIDERATION

What happens to the persecutors of Christ's Church? Ask Saul, the persecutor of the Church, what happened to him. 'It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks' (Acts 9:5), said the Lord to Saul, and Saul

was baptised and became Paul. What happened to Herod, the first persecutor of Christians? What happened to Julian the Apostate? They died an evil death, and their struggle against Christ dispersed into nothing, like smoke. And so throughout history: some persecutors became Christians and others had an evil end. The efforts of the one and the other against Christianity dispersed into nothing, like smoke. The Emperor Hadrian, attacking Jerusalem, meant to be revenged not only on the Jews but also on the Christians, making no distinction between the two. He scattered the Jews throughout the world and, in the place where Solomon's Temple had been, built a temple for idol-worship. He also re-named Jerusalem Aelia, after his own name, and forbade anyone to call it Jerusalem. He built a temple on Golgotha to the foul Venus, a temple to Zeus over the Lord's tomb and a temple to Adonis in Bethlehem. How distressed the Christians of that time must have been, seeing their holy places defiled in such a way! But what happened in the end? The Emperor Hadrian died an evil death, and the pagan temples were pulled down in the time of the Empress Helena and the Emperor Constantine, who in their place built beautiful churches which remain to this day. 'It is hard to kick against the pricks.' Oh, what a hopeless despair is the lot of all who struggle against Christ!

#### TO PONDER

Let me ponder on the vanity of men's efforts in opposition to the will of God (I Kings 12):

1. How ten tribes broke away and took Solomon's servant as king.
2. How Rehoboam prepared his army to make war against Jeroboam.
3. How God held him back from war, saying through His prophet: 'This thing is from Me.'

#### HOMILY

— on how the world hates a witness of its sin.

*'The world cannot hate you, but  
Me it hateth' (John 7:7).*

Why does the world hate Christ the Lord? The Lord Himself immediately explains this: '... because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil'. Men hate no-one so much as the witness of their sin; hence the great misdeeds of the world are committed at night, in the dark. And does God not see at night, in the dark? Yes, indeed; God sees, but the evildoer does not see God. If such a man has some belief in God, he thinks, from his lack of enlightenment, that the dark is a curtain between men and God. The Lord Christ Himself revealed clearly that God is all-seeing and that no sort of darkness can prevent His eye from seeing. He Himself saw men at a distance, like Nathaniel under the fig-tree. He saw an ass with its colt in another village. Spatial distance did not impede His sight. He foretold Peter's denial, Judas's betrayal, His own death and resurrection, the destruction of Jerusalem, the eternal nature of his Church, the suffering of His followers and the things that would come to pass at the end of the world. Distance of time did not impede His sight. But why enumerate all these? What is there more hidden than the heart of man? Is not the heart concealed under the thick curtain of the flesh? Are not the thoughts of the heart more hidden than the heart itself? But He looked into the darkness of men's hearts and read their thoughts in them: 'What evil think ye in your hearts' (Matt. 9:9)? Is it surprising, my brethren, that such a witness is feared by those who think or do evil? Is it surprising that the evildoers feared Him?

'The world cannot hate you.' Whom? All you who have a part in the evil world and who, because of this participation, do not dare to bear witness against the world. Those who fear men, how can they witness against men? Those who seek the praise of men, how can they dare bring on themselves the disapprobation of men?

Oh, my brethren, it is better for us if the world hates us but Christ loves us, than if the world loves and praises us and Christ turns His face away from us, saying: 'I know you not.' If the world hates us, let us call to mind the Saviour's words: '... know that it hated Me before it hated you (John 15:18).

O blessed Lord, Thou Source of every blessing, strengthen our hearts that we may not fear when the world hates us. Only do Thou bless us and love us, our gracious Saviour. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

